

SECRET-EYES ONLY

26 March 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Morning Meeting of 26 March 1968



25X

Godfrey advised that three enemy battalions besieged an American artillery unit west of Kontum and were finally beaten back after some initial success.

D/ONE reported that an ONE officer has produced a paper on the Soviet military build-up along the Sino-Soviet border. The Director suggested that the paper be distributed to the intelligence community.

DD/S reported that the trial of the two CAT pilots opened yesterday in Taipei and that the defense got a postponement until 22 April.



25X

Carver noted that an ORD proposal for protecting the Khe Sanh perimeter has been well received.

The Director drew attention to the item in today's New York Times on the resignation of Sidney Roche, a civilian adviser in the U. S. mission in Saigon.

Warner noted that the final phase of the NRO hearing went well yesterday.

Bross reported that General Maxwell Taylor has requested a joint CIA/DIA briefing on the enemy order of battle in South Vietnam. The Director concurred in DD/I's suggestion that the briefing be scheduled for next Monday.

SECRET-EYES ONLY

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

Bross advised that the panel of the PSAC which is reviewing Vietnam matters has requested a briefing on the enemy order of battle. The Director asked Bross to inform Steininger that at this juncture CIA is not able to oblige the panel's request.



25X

ADD/P reported he has been advised that Warner Brothers has produced a film entitled, "The Double Man," which is antipathetic to CIA.

25X



The Director urged DD/I and Godfrey to examine means of improving the cartographic aspects of the various intelligence publications.

ACTION:

1. The Director asked the DD/I to prepare a response to a letter which he has received from a Gustavus Adolphus College philosophy professor who has invited an Agency representative to address his students on the question of whether intelligence activity is in line with Christian principles.

The Director also asked the DD/I to examine what the Agency's response should be to a request to host students from Princeton University's Project Update.

Done



L. K. White

25X

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

U.S. AIDE IN SAIGON QUITS IN PROTEST

He Charges U.S. Programs
in Vietnam Are Failing

By BERNARD WEINRAUB
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, South Vietnam, March 25 — A former official on Gen. William C. Westmoreland's staff who has worked for the United States mission for more than a year is leaving South Vietnam to protest "failures" of the American effort here.

The official, Sidney J. Roche, issued a report to the mission saying that United States programs were being frustrated by massive corruption, an "ineffectual" South Vietnamese Army, badly managed aid policies and "unsound" American military efforts. He particularly cited his unhappiness with developments since the Vietcong'sunar New Year offensive.

"I had hoped that the Tet offensive would produce some changes in policies," Mr. Roche said today. "However, it appears that we are going to follow the same old road and pursue the same old policies."

In 1964 and 1965, Mr. Roche served on General Westmoreland's staff as plans officer in charge of defense planning in Southeast Asia. After that tour, he retired as a lieutenant colonel with 27 years' military experience.

He returned to Vietnam in December, 1966, to serve with

U.S. Aide in Saigon Quits, Charging 'Failure'

Continued From Page 1, Col. 4

the United States mission. He has served as a civilian adviser to the Fifth Division of the South Vietnamese Army and held several prominent positions in the mission's planning and pacification programs for the provinces around Saigon.

In one of these positions, Mr. Roche served as liaison between Robert Komer, who heads the pacification program, and John Vann, the highest ranking civilian adviser in the III Corps area, which includes Saigon.

Mr. Roche said that he decided to resign shortly after Mr. Komer's recent return from a series of conferences in Washington.

Hoped for Better Things

"We were all hoping that when Komer went to Washington and Wheeler came here for his visit, things would change," the hefty 51-year-old former Army officer said. He was referring to the recent visit of Gen. Earle C. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"But Komer came back and had a staff meeting and said business is the same — pacification is still the name of the game," Mr. Roche went on. "At that point I decided to quit. It hasn't worked in four years and it won't work now."

"We've got to be honest with ourselves," he went on. "We've got to realize that we're just not cutting it over here the way things are going."

"We have got to sit down and face certain realities here," he said in an interview. "The limited response that we've been maintaining is well and good if it is sufficient to do the job. It hasn't been so far."

He said that a sharp increase by American forces, as well as increased bombing of supply routes in North Vietnam together with the port of Haiphong, could be a solution.

"The purpose of war, any war, is to impose your will upon an enemy and not settle for a military standoff," he said.

Mr. Roche's "termination of service" report, widely distributed in the United States mission, has been received with anger and some embarrassment in high official quarters.

"It's one man's opinion," said one person close to the mission. "What he's saying is, after all, what other people have said before."

Says Many Agree

Mr. Roche's report reads like a blueprint of what high-level officials say privately is wrong with numerous programs here.

"Anyone who gets involved here will come to the same conclusions," Mr. Roche said. "People I've worked with — old friends, even strangers — have all come up to me in the past few days and said, 'You've hit the nail on the head.'"

One of the points he stresses is corruption. In Vietnam, he writes, power is personalized and not institutionalized in the United States. There

goes on, the traditional approach has always been to endure, if not accept, the tendency of Vietnamese officials to dip into the public till.

The Vietcong, making good use of propaganda, point out South Vietnamese corruption and emphasize to the people the perfidy of their leaders, Mr. Roche says.

They also point out that United States officials are little better because they support the South Vietnamese and, therefore, must support their corrupt practices, he continues.

"It is a propaganda line that is becoming increasingly hard to counter, especially when so little defense is possible," he goes on.

Says It Prolongs War

Aside from the monetary loss to the American taxpayer, he says, "which no doubt is a staggering amount, the harm to the United States and the war effort is enormous and its effects are prolonging the war."

Of the South Vietnamese Army, called the A.R.V.N., Mr. Roche writes:

"The Army of the Republic of Vietnam may very well be the worst army in all of Asia. It is organized along the lines employed by modern armies 30 years ago.

"It is top-heavy with needless headquarters and administrative elements. Its weapons, in the main, are outdated and no match for modern Chinese and Russian weapons now in the hands of the Vietcong and North Vietnamese regulars.

"Its leadership is ineffectual, poorly trained and head over heels in graft and corruption. The army is quite content to sit in camps, take their share of the graft and corruption and let the United States Army do the fighting and take the casualties.

"During the recent Tet offensive, instances were reported of refusal by A.R.V.N. commanders to venture out of forts to the assistance of towns and villages under siege by Vietcong troops. All of these problems remain after more than seven years of military assistance by the United States."

Says Police Neglect Duty

On other subjects, Mr. Roche says that the Vietnamese national police has "largely abdicated" its duty to destroy the Communist party apparatus.

"It is imperative that the national police organization be trained in the vital task of defending the nation from internal subversion," his report says.

Mr. Roche writes of United States aid:

"United States aid programs in Vietnam have been wasteful. Programs have been overfunded with no clear cut idea of the goal to be obtained. Programs are badly managed, with confusion as to who really manages what.

"Supervision has been nonexistent and many struggle with the idea that somehow we will win by the sheer weight of our expenditures. Waste has been the keynote with many United States employees apparently laboring under the misapprehension that all of the supplies and equipment come from some

distant and vague source which has an unlimited bounty to dispose of, all free."

Mr. Roche suggests the possibility that the entire aid program be taken over by the military.

"An agency either unable or unwilling to police itself should be policed by others," he writes.

Sees Error in Direction

Of the pacification program, Mr. Roche writes:

"The Revolutionary Development, or pacification, program, which has such worthwhile objectives as improving the living conditions of the Vietnamese peasants by building hamlet schools, roads, dispensaries, and providing security from Vietcong attacks is poorly supervised."

"This is not surprising when one realizes that the Central Intelligence Agency, whose charter by Congress is to provide foreign intelligence to the United States and to organize overseas intelligence nets, is the principal supervisor.

"It is small wonder that the principal effort by the C.I.A. would be the organization of intelligence nets rather than the supervision of a very worthwhile program."

Mr. Roche writes of United States military operations:

"American men are dying this very day because of faulty tactics devised and ordered from Washington, tactics which limit choice of targets, prescribe types of weapons and define military objectives.

Wants Tactics in Field

"The right of Washington to dictate the strategy cannot be questioned. However, the tactics to achieve the objective of the strategy should be left to field commanders."

Sitting in his crate-filled apartment this afternoon, Mr. Roche, who is scheduled to leave for the United States on Wednesday, said quietly: "It's not a question whether we did the right thing four or five years ago. It's a question of trying to extricate ourselves and save Southeast Asia for our side."

"We're not going to do it unless we face realities and make some changes," he said. "We have 20,000 dead so far and, God forbid, we're going to have another 20,000 dead if we continue as we are."

Mr. Roche, who is leaving two months before his 18-month contract expires is returning to his home in Columbus, Ga., where his wife and four children live. He said he had no immediate future plans.

"I just want to go fishing for a long, long time," he said.